



ASHOKA SOCIETY OF LITERATURE
PRESENTS

LITERATURE UNBOUND

A SPLASH OF ART!

**Exclusive Interview
on Ashoka's Art Fest
2025 with Ms Gayatri
Patil**

**ISSUE 5
FEBRUARY 2025**

POETRY CORNER!

Indulge yourself in an array
of skilfully crafted poems, a
testament to the power of
creative writing!

PEN & PERSPECTIVE!

Discover a plethora of
thought-provoking and
insightful articles inside!

**Cover Page
Featuring
Student
Artwork by
*Sarah Shaikh***



LETTER TO THE READERS

Dear Readers,

Warm greetings and welcome to the 5th Edition of Literature Unbound: The February Edition! This magazine showcases original poems, articles, and literary works by the talented writers of Grades 9 and 10.

As Celeste Ng beautifully said, "The story is truly finished—and meaning is made—not when the author adds the last period, but when the reader enters." Thank you for bringing life to our words.

We deeply appreciate Meghana Ma'am for her inspiration and unwavering support in creating this platform for literature enthusiasts. We welcome your feedback and contributions. Reach out to us at sarah.tshaikh1@gmail.com or aryagupta1635@gmail.com.

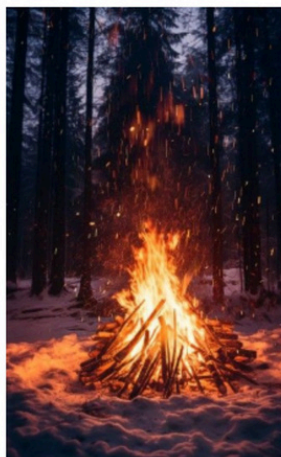
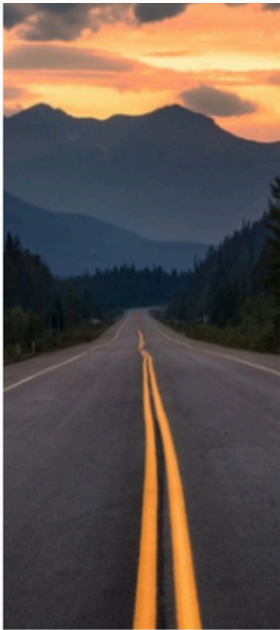
Thank you for exploring the world of words with us. Keep reading, writing, and discovering!

Warm regards,
Sarah Shaikh (President)
Arya Gupta (Vice-President),
Literature Unbound

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A painting of a pond with water lilies and a weeping willow tree. The scene is rendered in a soft, impressionistic style with visible brushstrokes. The water is a mix of blue and green, reflecting the surrounding foliage. Several pink water lilies are in bloom, their petals delicately painted. Large, round green lily pads float on the water's surface. In the background, a weeping willow tree with long,垂 down branches dominates the left side, its leaves in various shades of green. The overall mood is peaceful and serene.

POETRY CORNER

Image - AI generated

From Womb to Tomb

*The Grandpas Rule—Unstable Minds
They hold the launch, but not a book.
They launch their bombs, they burn those- mines.
Artificial minds in artificial time,
Artificial gods in temples shine,
Artificial love, a hollow shrine.
Artificial gold, the grand design,
Artificial souls in corporate line.*

*he earth was a womb, a mother's embrace,
Now she's a tomb, a forgotten place.
Once she cradled life with grace,
Now she drowns in fumes we chase.*

*We paved her veins, then watched her bleed,
Ripped her lungs, stilled her tongues to fuel our greed,
Tore her roots, drilled her bones to plant our seed,
But nothing grows where machines feed.*

*The rivers don't sing, they choke and die,
The trees don't whisper, just smoke fills the sky.*

*The winds, once free, now cease to cry,
While factories feast, mountains sigh.*

*Industries cloned the craft of Indus
trees,*

*Turned hands of skill to minds that
freeze.*

*Steel and wires replaced the keys,
Yet all they built brought Earth's
disease,*

*Still we have time to refresh our
breath,*

And tread back to the Indus trees.

*Time's a fraud, the clock's a chain,
Floating sheets of steel explain.*

*We chase the years but all in vain,
Planets turn, yet we abstain.*

*They preach in gold yet death is
crowned,*

*Their hands can't plant, yet war is
found.*

*Wood ain't trees, it's paper stacks,
Fish ain't fish, just plastic snacks.*

*Cows ain't cows, they're factory gas,
Food ain't food, it's toxic traps.*

*We don't dream—we filter fate,
We don't love—we calculate.
We don't pause, we move in haste,
A hollow world consumed in waste.*

*Who are we beyond the feed?
Do we lead, or do we heed?
What is left but smoke and greed?
What will grow from poisoned
seed?*

*The womb is closing, the tomb
draws near,
Idol minds create ideal minds, my
dear.*

*Born to worship, bound to kneel,
While factories feast and souls
congeal.*

*Lay your hand where rivers ran,
Breathe the truth, break the plan.
Dig the past, renew the land,
Or watch the earth slip through
your hand.*

— Mr Vivek Shrivastava

Who Am I in Your Story?

*Am I a cherished memory you remember,
Or just a thought that has passed?*

*Am I the moonlight that has brightened your way,
Or just a shadow that followed your path?*

*Am I the sun's ray that brings you hope,
Or just a beam of light you merely sought?*

*Am I the voice you long to hear,
Or just an echo—dull and unclear?*

*Am I the breeze that feels so peaceful,
Or the harsh storm that leaves you fearful?*

*Am I the story you read with devotion,
Or just a page you left without intention?*

Now tell me truly—who am I in your story?

— Anushree Varade

जिंदगी—एक सफर सुहाना...

जिंदगी में तो बहुत आँगी मुश्किलें,
पर किया जो डटकर सामना, तो हो
जाँगी पार मंजिलें!

आँखों में उम्मीद लिए,
होठों पर मुस्कान लिए,
चल दिए हम जिंदगी के सफर पर,
दिलों में अरमान लिए।

— शुभी अग्रवाल

प्रभु की लीला है अपरंपार,
जिंदगी में कभी ना मानना हार,
हो जाँगी हर मुश्किलें पार,
बस करते रहो कोशिश बार-बार,
चाहे हो मंगल या रविवार,
अच्छे रखो अपने विचार।

आज हो या कल हो,
आपका सब मंगल हो,
यही है कामना मन में,
आपका कार्य सफल हो।

शाम हो या रात,
करनी है हमको आपसे बात,
बस ऐसे ही बीत जाए जिंदगी,
आपके साथ-साथ।



January Embers

*Her eyes, like winter fire, burn so bright,
An elegant spark in the coldest night.
A gaze that speaks, a world untold,
A story written in hues of gold.*

*Her hair, like January embers, glows,
Soft as whispers, light as snow.
Her laughter echoing, sweet and free,
Like a song that only I can see.*

*The way she moves, with effortless grace,
Turns every head, yet leaves no trace.
She carries storms within her soul,
Yet wears a smile she can't control.*

*Oh, she's an angel, living on earth,
A light that proves what love is worth.
With every step, she mends, she heals,
A dream so vivid, yet so real.*

— Anonymous



PEN & PERSPECTIVE



A SPLASH OF COLOUR: AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH MRS GAYATRI PATIL ON ASHOKA ART FEST 2025

BY ARYA GUPTA

We were able to have a word with Mrs. Gayatri Patil, the Head of the Art Department, regarding the upcoming Art Fest which everyone has been waiting for. She strongly mentioned the level of commitment and effort that students and faculty put in to ensure that the event is a success, and outstandingly shared information that complemented it.

This year, the Art Fest's theme will be

“She strongly mentioned the level of commitment and effort that students and faculty put in to ensure that the event is a success.”

“Voice of Change”. The idea behind selecting these artworks alongside installations is geared towards the theme and it focuses heavily on sustainability. Quite a number of pieces are done using re-usable materials like fabric, highlighting the level of creativity that is eco-friendly.

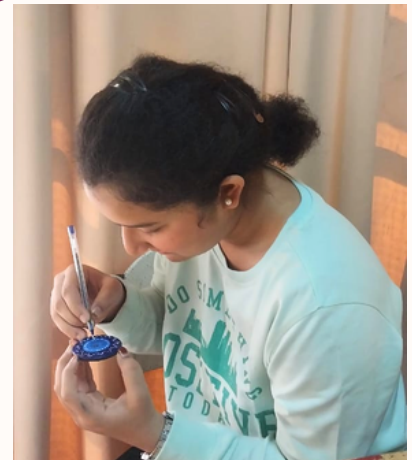
Mrs. Patil also shared the other side of the festival which is heavily curated. She mentioned that all the themes that accompany this festival are predetermined so that students are given ample time to reflect on the statement and create pieces that will resonate.

One of the most striking elements this year is the zeal for the event that's being shown by the young student artists. They are looking forward to presenting their works and have shown

a keen willingness to remain at their stalls for the entire duration of the symposium. The fest makes an effort to encompass participations from students of all levels and enables them to show off their talent.

With such thoughtful planning and passionate involvement, the upcoming Art Fest promises to be an inspiring celebration of art, sustainability, and change.

Sneak peek



THE STATE OF GLOBAL DEMOCRACY IN 2025: TRENDS AND CHALLENGES - PART I

BY KARTHIKEYAN IYER

Introduction: Democracy - The Old, The New, and the "Wait, What?"

Democracy has always been like a giant family reunion—loud, messy, full of unexpected arguments, and somehow, everyone claims to have the best recipe for success. As we step into 2025, democracy is evolving, adapting to new challenges, and, in some cases, taking a few steps back (or tripping over its own feet).

From AI-driven election campaigns to leaders who still think fax machines are

cutting-edge, the state of global democracy is as fascinating as ever.

But with great change comes great confusion—so let's dive into the trends, the troubles, and the occasional comic relief that democracy is serving up this year.

Trend #1: AI and Elections - Robo-Politicians or Just Smarter Lies?

One of the biggest developments in democratic systems worldwide is the increasing role of artificial intelligence.



In 2025, AI will be used for everything from voter outreach to fact-checking—and, of course, for generating political speeches that sound convincing but say absolutely nothing.

While some argue that AI-driven campaigns make politics more transparent, others worry that deepfake videos and AI-generated misinformation could make truth even harder to find than a politician who keeps their campaign promises. Who needs conspiracy theorists when a well-trained chatbot can create a more believable political scandal in seconds? And let's not forget the candidates themselves—some leaders are so robotic in their speeches that AI might actually improve their personality. At this point, we're just waiting for the first AI-powered president who runs on a platform of "0% corruption, 100% efficiency, and no need for bathroom breaks."

Trend #2: The Rise (and Fall) of Populism - Still Popular or Running Out of Likes?

Populist* leaders, who thrive on dramatic speeches, strong nationalism* and policies that sound great but have

all the structural integrity of a sandcastle, have been on the rise for the past decade. However, by 2025, we see a mixed picture.

In some countries, populist leaders continue to dominate, capitalizing on economic fears, social media, and the ever-powerful ability to blame "the other side" for everything. In others, voters seem to be experiencing what we might call "populism fatigue"—essentially, realizing that shouting slogans doesn't exactly fix inflation or make traffic disappear.

Still, populism remains a strong force. After all, there will always be an audience for speeches that begin with "The elites are lying to you!" and end with "Only I can save you!"—usually followed by suspiciously vague economic plans.

Populist* - A leader who claims to represent the common people against elites.

Nationalism* - Strong support for one's country, sometimes at the expense of others.

To be continued. Stay tuned! Catch the full article in the next edition to dive deeper into 'The State of Global Democracy'.

Pattachitra: The Ancient Art That Tells Stories Without Words

BY GAURISRI TIWARI

Imagine a painting so detailed and vibrant that it feels like the characters could leap off the canvas and start talking. That's the magic of Pattachitra, one of India's oldest art forms, from Odisha and West Bengal. But sadly, this beautiful tradition is slowly fading away, hidden in the shadows of modern art and technology.

Pattachitra isn't just about pretty pictures—it's about storytelling. Every brushstroke tells a tale from ancient Indian mythology. Think of scenes where Krishna is playfully stealing butter, and where fierce battles from the Mahabharata come to life. The artists don't just paint; they narrate epic stories without using a single word.



What makes Pattachitra even more fascinating is how it's made. The artists don't use store-bought paints or fancy tools. Instead, they create their own colors from nature. These colors are mixed with natural gum to make them last for centuries. The canvas isn't paper, but cloth, coated with a mixture of chalk and tamarind seed gum.

Creating a Pattachitra painting isn't easy. It takes days, sometimes weeks, of careful detailing. Yet, despite this dedication, the art form is struggling to survive. Modern lifestyles and digital art have made it hard for traditional artists to earn a living.

But all hope isn't lost! By supporting local artisans, buying their artwork, and sharing their stories, we can help keep Pattachitra alive. So next time you see one of these masterpieces, remember—you're not just looking at a painting; you're witnessing a story from another time.

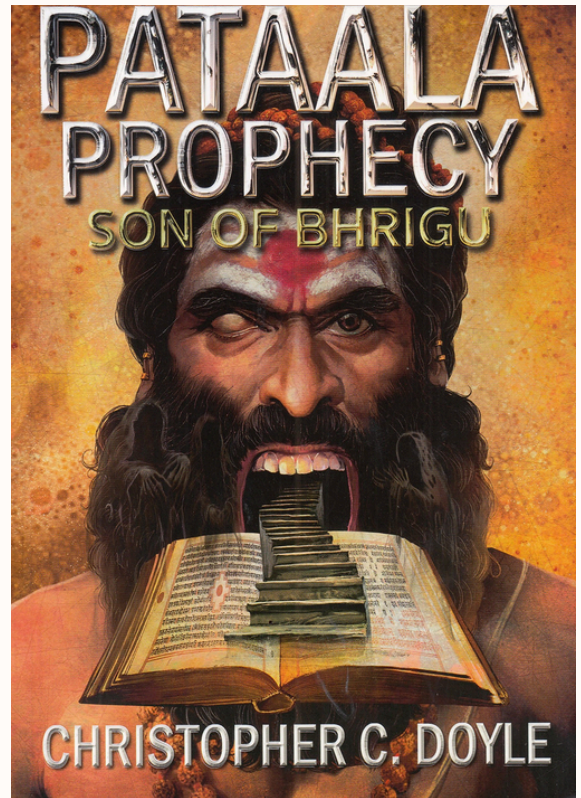


The Pataala Prophecy: Myth, Magic & Mystery | Book Review

BY SAANVI PATIL

Christopher C. Doyle's *The Pataala Prophecy*, particularly the first book, *Son of Bhrigu*, offers a compelling fusion of Indian mythology and contemporary thriller elements that truly captivates. The author masterfully weaves ancient mythology into a modern setting, making the mythological elements feel integral rather than superficial.

The concept of Pataala and its ancient powers is handled with a palpable sense of mystery and intrigue, presenting a fresh take on familiar tales. The book's fast-paced narrative takes the reader through a seamless blend of mystery, action, and suspense, following teenage protagonists Arjun and Maya as they embark on a journey of discovery and understanding. Their character development, along with



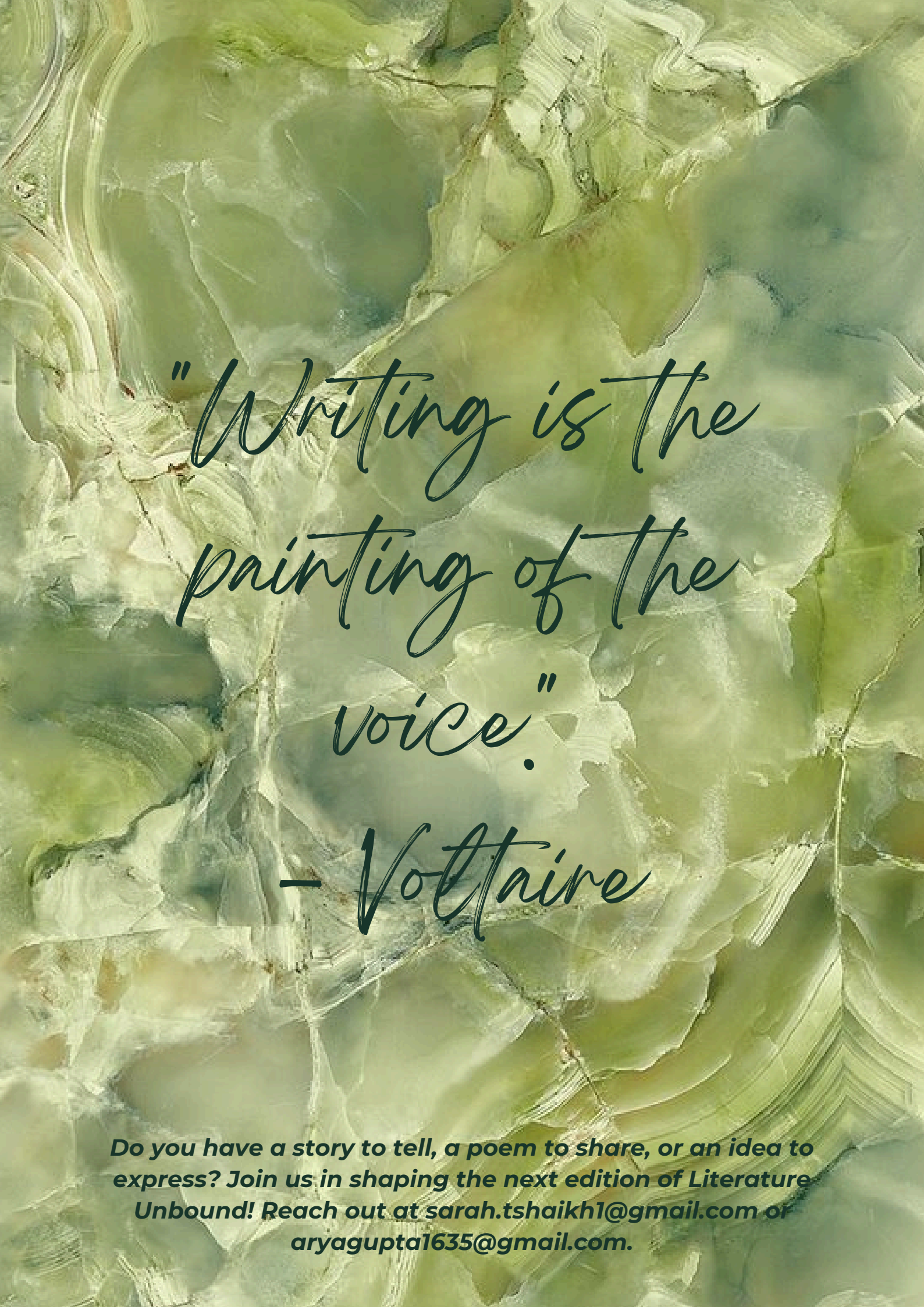
"Destiny is not a matter of chance; it is a matter of choice."

— Christopher C. Doyle, *Son of Bhrigu*

the evolving relationships between them, is thoughtfully crafted.

The author's world-building is another strength, effortlessly merging ancient mythology with modern reality, further enriched by the inclusion of the secretive Sangha. As the first book in the series, *Son of Bhrigu* lays a strong foundation for future installments. While some may draw comparisons to other young adult fantasy series, the deep roots in Indian mythology set *The Pataala Prophecy* apart, offering an exciting and immersive reading experience for those who appreciate mythological thrillers.





*"Writing is the
painting of the
voice."*

— Voltaire

Do you have a story to tell, a poem to share, or an idea to express? Join us in shaping the next edition of Literature Unbound! Reach out at sarah.tshaikh1@gmail.com or aryagupta1635@gmail.com.